



Finger Lakes National Forest, Hector, New York

Forest Happenings!!

Caring for the Land and Serving People

Fall Happenings

"Autumn begins with a subtle change in the light, with skies a deeper blue, and nights that become suddenly clear and chilled.

The season comes full with the first frost, the disappearance of migrant birds, and the harvesting of the season's last crops."

Glenn Wolff and Jerry Dennis



Firewood Permits

With a chill in the air, we wanted to remind everyone that Firewood Permits are available for purchase at our office. Individuals may purchase up to 10 cords (\$10/cord) with a minimum purchase of 2 cords. Only dead and down trees may be removed. The permit is good until December 30, 2012.

Make sure you have your permit in your possession and you are properly recording each load of firewood.

Help slow the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer - do not transport your firewood outside the local area. Schuyler County has been quarantined by the State of NY. Wood cut within Schuyler County cannot be transported out of the county.

Trails

Horseback riders should soon be seeing more "ride-thru" gates installed on the Forest horse trails this fall. These get permanently installed on the trails open to horses which allow easier and safer passage while riding. As always – be sure to close any gates as you pass through!



As always, we are very grateful for the work that is being done by the trail volunteers on the Forest. A special thanks to the, Cornell Outdoor Oddesy club for their efforts in replacing boardwalk along Interloken Trail.

Camping

It's been a busy summer in the campgrounds this year, with many new faces enjoying the facilities. Blueberry Patch Campground is scheduled to close for the season November 25; Potomac Group Campground will remain open for reservations throughout the winter (www.recreation.gov / 1-877-444-6777); and the Backbone Horse Camp will once again allow non-horse users to camp after October 8.

As always, the National Forest is open to camping, unless posted closed. You can camp pretty much anywhere using no-trace techniques if you prefer that over a campground. Please remember that you cannot camp in pastures when livestock are present!

Wildlife Happenings

Project implementation for the *Early Successional Wildlife Habitat Management Project* will likely begin sometime late fall. The purpose of this project is to increase the amount of early successional aspen habitat on the forest by regenerating a mature aspen-dominated stand via coppicing.

Many wildlife species rely on young forests for a part, or all, of their life cycle, including many migratory birds that nest in mature forest but preferentially use young forest stages during migration, fledging, and post-nesting periods.

Historically, young forest habitats were sustained primarily by fire and other more natural disturbance events. Today, in most regions, commercial timber harvests and other proactive habitat management practices must be implemented at regular intervals to ensure a continuous supply of habitat for early successional-dependent wildlife.

Forest personnel, along with the Ruffed Grouse Society regional biologist, identified this project site which lies directly north of the Potomac loop trail and adjacent to Chicken Coop and Potomac Roads. This project is intended to complement the aspen regeneration cut that was done in the winter of 2011 by creating an uneven-aged forest mosaic composed of even-aged forest patches in an area that can be managed for varying age classes of aspen.

Anyone interested in volunteering with the wildlife program here on the Forest, please call or email Paul Widowski at 607-546-4470 or pwidowski@fs.fed.us



Ballard Pond Walkway Receives a Face-Lift

Ballard Pond, located along County Rte 1 /Searsburg Road and is one of our most popular fishing ponds on the Forest. This pond is stocked annually with Trout in May, and has a healthy population of Bass as well. Late this summer the walkway up to the pond was redone (packed and regraded) and extended to allow better access to the ponds edge for those who are disabled and other to enjoy. So if you want to catch a fish, or sit a spell, check it out.



Range – Sure glad it started raining!

Early in the season the dry conditions had us all in a scare with drier than normal weather conditions. Luckily the rain returned and forage conditions improved. Thanks to Mark Welch, Hector Grazing Association, we were able to catch up with mowing and de-brushing and got old fence removed and new installed.

The grazing season ends October 15th with round up occurring from then till November 1st.

The time also coincides with various game hunting on the Finger Lakes National Forest and we ask if you are out there and open a gate to pass through to please close the gate behind you. Early in the season we had 40+ head of cattle out of pasture due to one of the gate panels being left open.

In addition, please don't cut the fences. Every spring we find fences that have been cut and need to be repaired – a lot of time and money could be saved if hunters did not do this.

We will be installing early this fall a couple of new trough systems, using old tractor tires. (We'll be sure to include a picture in the Winter Happenings!) These new tires hope to improve access to small calves and have less long-term maintenance issues.

Outreach Activities

This summer saw various outreach activities with different groups.

A Geneva Boy Scout Troop visited a managed forest to learn about the various forestry techniques.

For the fifth year running, a freshman orientation class from Hobart William-Smith College came down for an afternoon visit where F.S. employees presented information on the Forest and some of the basics of the Forest Service's mission of caring for the land and serving the people.

A Cornell Landscape Architecture class led by Brian Davis came over with the purpose of finding out about some of the management practices we use and how those practices are derived. They visited a few locations for examples on the Forest while Forest personnel answered questions along the way.

Lastly, a presentation was given on wildlife management for a youth group from Ithaca named Primitive Pursuits Campers.

Congratulations – Seneca Lake Scenic By-Way!

We would be remiss if we did not pass along a well-deserved **Congratulations** to the Seneca Lake Scenic By-Way Committee for all of their hard work (10 years in the making) in getting an 18 mile portion of State Rte 414 from Watkins Glen thru Hector and portions of Lodi designated as a Scenic By-Way! It's a beautiful drive!

Smokey Sitings

Smokey Bear was sighted at a number of local events this summer, including:

- Hector Fair Parade
- Trumansburg Parade
- Interlaken Olde Home Days Parade
- Strawberry Festival Parade

He and his "handlers" were well received and happy to share the message of fire prevention.



From the Ranger...

"Autumn is a second spring, when every leaf is a flower" - Albert Camus

I was on the Forest today snapping a couple of photos for this newsletter, and noticed; as most of you probably are, that the leaves are starting to change. The hints of yellows, oranges and reds are just starting to show, soon enough we will be in full color and then have leaf off. Fall never goes slow enough, seems one day you notice the colors starting to change and then the next the leaves are gone.

This fall, I'm going to make an effort to stop and take it all in and not let it slip thru my fingers as in years past. The Forest is a great place to do just that. Views from Picnic Area Road overlooking Seneca Lake are magnificent at this time of year.

Mathews Road is just as beautiful. Sit along the edge of Teeter Pond, or along the banks of Potomac Pond. A drive on Burnt Hill Road can be just as intriguing. A hike on one of our trails can be just as relaxing.

Whatever way you choose to enjoy the National Forest (as long as it's legal) I encourage you to do so. Before your know it, the snow will be flying – and we will have yet another season to enjoy. - Jodie

p.s. We are always in need of photos of the National Forest. So, if you are out and about and snap some good ones and would like to share – please do so! We will put them on our website for all to enjoy!

Just contact Sherise in our office at (607) 546-4470.



Just For Fun! Just For Kids!

Search for what is in the Finger Lakes National Forest!

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- RUFFEDGROUSE
- WHITESPRUCE
- BOBCAT
- CATTLES
- BEAVERS

- LIVEOAK
- WOODCHUCK
- RAVINES
- TURKEYS

- WHITEOAK
- BATS
- PONDS
- DEERS

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